



# Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

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## Anti-Cancer: A New Way of Life

A Summary by Laurel Blomquist

The cover of *Anti-Cancer: A New Way of Life* proclaims, "All of us have cancer cells in our bodies. But not all of us will develop cancer." Did you know you have cancer cells in your body? Does that thought scare you? It doesn't have to. Read on to see what you can do about making sure those cells never proliferate or become life-threatening.

David Servan-Schreiber was an ambitious psychiatrist who had spent his life climbing the ranks of his profession. One day the volunteer subject of his brain MRI study didn't show up, so he put himself into the machine. The scans showed a walnut-sized tumor in his brain, and thus the doctor became the patient. After diagnosis, Dr. Servan-Schreiber was treated using the most modern techniques available: surgery, chemotherapy, radiation. When he asked his doctor if there was something else he could do to prevent the cancer from returning, his doctor told him to continue living life as he had prior to his diagnosis.

I have something to confess. I was diagnosed with Stage I breast cancer this past February. Yes, I followed my doctors' recommendations regarding established medical protocols for my cancer. However, you have a feeling of powerlessness when you are just waiting around to see if the cancer is going to come back. Reading this book, as well as *Foods to Fight Cancer*, changed the course of my life forever.

If you had a toolbox that you could use to combat an illness from all sides, wouldn't you want to use every tool in the box? I was inspired to change the paradigm, from giving over control to my doctors to *taking* control. I established a self-care routine that included rest, diet, exercise, meditation, time in nature, breathing techniques, and many more small changes in my daily routine that would alter my prognosis for the future. Of course, these diet and lifestyle changes don't just lower my chances of getting cancer, there's more. According to the journal *Oxidative Medicine and Cellular Longevity*, "Oxidative stress impacts almost all acute and chronic progressive disorders and on a cellular basis is intimately linked to aging, cardiovascular disease, cancer, immune function, metabolism and neurodegeneration." (<http://www.hindawi.com/journals/omcl/>)

In other words, an anti-cancer diet is also anti-diabetes, obesity, insulin sensitivity, metabolic syndrome, neurological disease (Alzheimer's,

## This Week's Box

**ITALIAN GARLIC:** As the garlic continues to dry, you'll notice the skin becoming more papery and easier to peel. The flavor will also intensify the longer the garlic has been curing. At this intermediate stage, the garlic is certainly excellent to use immediately or store for later.

**SWEET ONIONS:** Sweet onions feature a milder and of course sweeter taste than other onions. Since they mature faster than storage onions, you'll notice a thinner skin. This means sweet onions are best used as they're harvested; you'll receive plenty of storage onions in later shares. Perfectly palatable raw, this week's selection from the Sweet Spanish family are a great addition to salads and sandwiches.

**CAULIFLOWER:** You can add variety to the menu by mashing cauliflower in place of potatoes. Perfect for paleo diets or anyone looking to cut a few calories and carbs.

**BROCCOLI OR ZUCCHINI:** Skip the dirty dishes the next time you grill by steaming your broccoli in a foil packet. Throw in minced garlic and onion for an aromatic yet simple side. Zucchini is excellent in mock "Apple" Pie instead of apples. If you didn't know it was zucchini, you might not even notice the difference.

**CUCUMBERS:** The days of plenty have arrived. This week is a great time to turn your thoughts towards preservation. Whether you opt for the ease of fridge pickles or the long-term storage of full canning, you'll be able to enjoy the height of summer throughout the year.

**GREEN TOP CARROTS:** Not a fan of carrot chunks in your salads? Try grating the vibrant root for a different texture. Experiment with fine or coarse shreds. Don't forget the green tops are just as edible as the root. See last week's newsletter for recipes and tips.

**RED CABBAGE:** While you can cook the sweetheart cabbage, the tender and mildly sweet leaves are well-suited to use in salads. Paired perfectly with the sweet onions in this week's share, raw salads are a great way to keep the kitchen cool while the outside temps heat up.

**GREEN CURLY KALE:** See this week's vegetable feature for more info and recipes.

**GREEN AND YELLOW BEANS:** If the dill from your herb pack is ready for use, refrigerator dilly beans are a good way to preserve those green and yellow beans that don't get used in your casseroles, curries and crudités. You'll be happy to have a healthy snack option waiting for you when you're in the mood for a little crunch.

**CHIOGGIA BEETS:** If you enjoy juicing fruits and vegetables, your beets provide not only unique color, but wonderful vitamins and nutrients. Keeping the skin on will increase the earthiness of the flavor, or you can peel your beets to mellow it out. Just like the carrots, the tops of your beets are also edible and nutritious greens.

**FENNEL:** Overindulge at dinner? Allow fennel to soothe your digestion by steeping the feathery fronds for at least ten minutes in boiling water. A handful of the greens (and honey to taste) should have you on your way to feeling more comfortable.

**NEW POTATOES:** Remember to handle your new potatoes with care as they are still rather vulnerable to bruising with such fresh and tender skin. Your delicacy will be rewarded with a smooth and creamy flesh that keeps its shape in potato salad.

**CHOICE--SWEET ITALIAN BASIL:** Please only take one small handful per vegetable share.

Parkinson's, etc.), gastrointestinal disease (ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease, etc.), autoimmune disease (Rheumatoid arthritis, Lupus, etc.), and any other acute or chronic disease characterized by inflammation and oxidative stress, as well as the process of aging in general. Everyone says they want a long, healthy life. I was willing to do everything in my power in order to achieve that.

Like myself, Dr. Servan-Schreiber was not convinced that he had no control over the recurrence of his cancer other than the treatments that doctors could provide. He points out that doctors who are at the pinnacle of research in their professions cannot stop to conduct research outside of their fields, or read experimental protocols that haven't been given a double-blind

study. He does not blame his doctors for this because they are busy doing important work to save the lives of their patients. However, there are many other practitioners doing alternative therapies and research. Thus, he combed the planet for every scientific study that has been done up to the publishing date and uses research from other scientists to support his dietary recommendations. He often cites the research done by Drs. Beliveau and Gingras, who you may remember from *Foods to Fight Cancer*, the book I reviewed two weeks ago. Of course, these two are not the only scientists he has explored, the chapter on food alone has 140 citations! The scope of this article is much too short to present all his findings, however I have included some of his recommendations and

a few other thoughts for an anti-cancer diet in the full-length version of this article on our blog.

In addition to recommendations for specific foods, the author also emphasized the importance of organic vegetables versus conventional. He cites a study by Dr. Cynthia Curl who measured the amount of organochlorine pesticides in the urine of 42 preschool children. Children who were fed an organic diet had pesticide levels below the Environmental Protection Agency's maximum, while children on the conventional diet had a level 4 times the maximum. While he states that some doctors have interpreted these findings as insignificant, he disagrees, and so do other doctors. (p. 89)

This book was written as a tool to help all of us flip our genetic switch for cancer off by making decisions that will impact our long-term health. In summary, the doctor states, "Every day, at every meal, we can choose food that will defend our bodies against the invasion of cancer by: detoxifying carcinogenic substances; supporting our immune system; blocking the development of new (blood) vessels needed for tumor growth; preventing tumors from creating the inflammation that serves as their fertilizer; blocking the mechanisms that will enable them to invade neighboring tissues; and promoting the suicide of cancer cells." (p. 125)

For more information, be sure to check out the book and his website: <http://www.anticancerbook.com>

*NOTE: We've always valued nutrient density in the crops we produced, but Laurel's article and the things she's been sharing with us reinforces the value of eating a diet based on nutrient dense, organic vegetables and fruit. We encourage you to read the full-length version of Laurel's article on our blog where she goes into a bit more detail about specific anti-cancer properties of a variety of vegetables and fruits. Thank you Laurel!—Richard & Andrea*

### Vegetable Feature: Green Curly Kale

In the foreword to her book, *Brassicas—Cooking the World's Healthiest Vegetables...*, Laura B. Russell states "When Hippocrates said 'Let food be thy medicine, and medicine be thy food,' there's little doubt in my mind that he was referring to foods drawn from the brassica family." We thought it fitting, given the topic of our main article, to feature green curly kale. This is just one of several varieties of kale we grow. Our other varieties include red curly, lacinato and baby kale as well as collard greens. These greens vary from others we've sent your way in that their leaves are thicker than say spinach. As such, they need to be cooked a little longer or "marinated" to soften the leaves.

Kale may be eaten raw or cooked. Raw kale salads have become quite popular in recent years and are great for the summer when lettuce and spinach are less available. If you choose to eat kale raw, we recommend thinly slicing it and "marinating" it for 30 minutes or more with oil and/or an acidic ingredient (such as vinegar or lemon juice) to soften the leaves and make them more palatable. Kale may also be stir-fried, sautéed, steamed or added to soups, stews and the like. Baked kale chips are also a fun way to eat kale and a healthy alternative to potato chips! Due to the recent surge in popularity of kale, there are loads of recipes available on the internet. We hope you enjoy your "Wisconsin Superfood" this week!

### Vegetable Quesadillas with Pistachio-Kale Pesto

Yield: 4 servings quesadillas and 1 cup pesto

#### Kale Pesto:

- ½ cup pistachios
- 1 clove garlic
- ½ cup olive oil
- 2 cups raw kale, packed
- 2 cups basil, loosely packed
- Juice of 1 lemon, more to taste
- Salt & freshly ground black pepper, to taste

#### Quesadilla Filling:

- 2 medium zucchini
- 1 medium onion, thinly sliced
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 8-10 cherry tomatoes, quartered
- 1 cup cheese, shredded (variety to your liking)
- Salt & freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 4 tortillas (9-10-inch)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F degrees. Cut zucchini into slices ¼-inch thick. Lay them on a sheet tray and brush with olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Flip the slices over and repeat on the other side. Thinly slice the onions and toss with enough olive oil to lightly coat. Put the onions on the sheet tray with the zucchini. Place in the oven and bake 15-20 minutes or until the zucchini are tender. You may need to remove the onions before the zucchini is finished.
2. While the zucchini is baking, prepare the pesto. Place all the ingredients for the pesto into a high speed blender or a food processor. Blend until nearly smooth. Adjust seasoning with additional salt, pepper and lemon juice as needed.
3. Assemble the quesadillas. Spread approximately 2 Tbsp of kale pesto on half of each tortilla. Top with zucchini slices, onion, and cherry tomatoes. Sprinkle cheese on top of each tortilla, then fold in half.
4. Heat a skillet over medium heat. Add ½ Tbsp olive oil. When the skillet is warm, add the quesadillas and cook on each side for about 2 minutes or until the tortilla is golden and the cheese is melted. Cut into quarters or thirds and serve immediately.

Recipe adapted from one originally sourced from [purelyelizabeth.com](http://purelyelizabeth.com)

### Kale Chips with Almond Butter and Miso

Yield: 4-6 servings

- ¼ cup almond butter
- 2 Tbsp warm water
- ¼ cup chopped onion
- 1 ½ Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for greasing
- 1 garlic clove, chopped
- 1 Tbsp white miso
- 2 tsp fresh oregano, chopped
- 2 tsp fresh thyme, chopped
- 1 tsp cider vinegar
- 1 tsp tamari
- ¼ tsp ground turmeric
- ⅛ to ¼ tsp crushed red pepper
- 1 bunch green or red curly kale, washed
- Salt, to taste

1. Preheat the oven to 300°F. Lightly grease two sheet trays and set aside.
2. Place all of the ingredients except the kale and salt into a blender or food processor. Puree until smooth.
3. Shake any excess water off of the kale. Strip the leaves off the main stem. Discard the stems and tear the leaves into large bite-sized pieces. Place the leaves into a large mixing bowl and drizzle the almond butter mixture on top. Using your hands or tongs, mix the kale to evenly coat all of the pieces with the almond butter mixture.
4. Spread the kale pieces evenly on the two sheet trays and lightly sprinkle with salt. Place in the oven and bake for about 15 minutes. Remove the pans from the oven and lightly toss the kale pieces. Return the pans to the oven and bake for an additional 5-10 minutes or until all the pieces are crispy.
5. Remove from the oven and let cool, then carefully lift the kale chips off the baking sheets and serve.

Recipe adapted from one originally published in *Food & Wine* magazine in March 2012.